

Moravian Moment # 06.....
Leaving all for the sake of Jesus Christ

The burning desire and passion for souls led Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann from Herrnhut Germany, heading for St. Thomas on the 21st August, 1732. *They left the comfort of their family, their home, their friends and all the familiar things of life to enter the unknown.* It took them 3 ½ months on the high seas before they arrived in St. Thomas by ship on the 13th December, 1732. When they arrived in St. Thomas, the only financial backing they had was \$ 6.66 between them. Dober and Nitschmann were exercising their Faith in God. How were they going to survive in a strange land where they knew no one and had so little money? They said to themselves, “Little is much when God is in it”.

It is important to note that, as in the other Islands religious provision had been made for the Planters (in this case by the Reformed Church) but nothing whatever was done for the Slaves. According to Bishop Maynard, “the Planters felt that obeahism was good enough for the Slaves, for the Planters believed that the Slave had no soul”.

Dober and Nitschmann had a letter from Anthony Ulrich for his brother and sister in St. Thomas. The Missionaries sought out and read the letter to them. In the letter was a quotation from John 17: 3 “This is life Eternal that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent”. After reading the letter, *the Missionaries began to testify of Jesus who came to save the world, black Slaves included. This was the unlocking of the door to the Evangelization of the Slaves in the West Indies.*

The Missionaries faced four formidable challenges to the work:

1. The distrust of the Slaves who believed that they were on the side of the Planters and was using this Evangelistic work as a cover to spy on them and report to their Managers.
2. The hostility of the Planters who objected to anyone preaching to slaves and **putting ideas** into their heads with regard to the fact that they were human beings of value in the sight of GOD.
3. Imprisonment for preaching the gospel.
4. Death by disease of Missionary after Missionary from the Yellow Fever epidemic.

They survived, through hardship, discouragement and death, for they were on a Mission for God. (Next time we will look at their strategy for Mission)

18th February, 2007